Thomas, the struggling pilgrim

By WILLIAM L. TRIMYER

Lesson for March 30, 1980
Scripture References: John 11:7-8; 14-16; 14:1-7; 20:19-29
Focal Passages: John 11:16; 14:1-7; 20:24-29
The Doubting Thomas [John 11:16]

In the realm of religious faith and practices, anyone who doubts or raises unsettling questions is looked upon with "jaundiced" eyes. We label such a person as "Doubting Thomas." We tend to become threatened by those who do not follow the beaten paths or the tried and proven. In our snug corners of own little worlds we sometimes reject new ideas and alternative ways of looking at things.

We crown those who deviate from the norm with the title of "heretic" or "rebel". The disciple we study this week was a realist who required facts and proof in order to believe certain things. Thomas has always been referred to as "the doubter." On the basis of one statement, we characterize him as a self-styled religious maverick!

What we may fail to see is that Thomas was also a devoted disciple of Jesus. When Jesus was summoned to Bethany to see about Lazarus, it meant entering a hostile territory and exposing himself to those who were bent on destroying him. Thomas revealed his true stripes when he said, "If Jesus is going, then let us also go with him, that we may die with him."

Such a courageous attitude on the part of Thomas did not last for ever. Thomas, along with the other disciples, found it difficult to remain at Jesus' side when the "heat was on." All of the disciples experienced their hour of disillusionment and doubt. Such an act of unfaith, as expressed by Peter or Thomas, does not wipe out their deep sense of love and devotion. We all have our moments when we do not remain true to our intentions and commitments.

The Confused Thomas [John 14:1-7]

God is like a good father or mother who provides for his children. During his final days on earth, Jesus sought to reassure his followers that they would be cared for even after his death. Jesus' talk about leaving surely caused the disciples to feel uneasy.

Jesus describes a place of future residence for his followers. Christians believe that God will somehow preserve their soul, psychic, personality, etc. in another dimension. Christians believe that the earthly pilgrimage will continue on after their human bodies bow to the grave.

After the resurrection event, Jesus made several appearances to Mary Magdalene and the disciples. Thomas was not present when Jesus first appeared to the disciples, for reasons we are not aware of. But when the disciples told Thomas that they had seen the Lord, he immediately found it too incredible to believe. He needed proof! "I must have the facts," he must have said. His response is not atypical and should not be judged too harshly. The idea of resurrection astounds any mind that seeks to understand.

Thomas experienced a deep sense of wonderment for what had taken place. Pershaps we may learn from Thomas and renew our own sense of wonderment and awe for such an event as resurrection. It is the one event in history that offers us hope for victory over death!

We live in a generation which craves a sign. We do not generally believe without seeing. A new television show deals with events that are INCREDIBLE, that is, they are too unbelievable to be true. Would you believe me when I tell you that I once knew a dog who dipped snuff? Your initial response is probably, "Ah, come on, you are surely kidding." Believe it or not, it's true. But you would have to see it to believe it. Right?

Is seeing believing? Not always. There are some matters in life we must simply accept by faith. As Christians, "we walk by faith, not by sight." (II Cor. 5:7)

Dr. Trimyer is pastor of Elon Baptist Church in Pamplin, Va.

The Bible and daily living

The idea that God's house contains many rooms suggests that Christ's followers will be provided and cared for. Such a notion offers Christians the security of hope. It is reassuring to know that at the end of life's journey there awaits us a comfort-station.

The disciples spent three years with Jesus, and during that time they came to understand who he was and what he was about. At least it is not unreasonable to assume this. But facts bear out that the disciples were not always in touch with Jesus' true meaning. It took some time for them to understand that Jesus had not come to establish an earthy rule.

Thomas asked the question, "How can we know the way that you go?" At least Thomas bothered to ask! He revealed his ignorance and misunderstanding of Jesus' going and coming. We learn a lesson from Thomas, namely, if we want to know something we must ask!

The Convinced Thomas [John 20:19-29]

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Appomattox FHA - HERO members from Appomattox County High School and Appomattox Middle School are shown in above photo as they prepare to leave for the State FHA Leadership Conference at the Hotel Roanoke in Roanoke Thursday, Friday and Saturday of last week. Shown, left to right, are Cheryl Walton; Miss Pat Hudson, advisor; Jane Gulli; Joan Williams; Brenda Coleman; Wanda Forest; Cheryl Martin; Miss Wanda Royal, advisor; and Mrs. Betty Jo Smith, advisor.

WMU sponsoring retreat

The Appomattox Baptist Association WMU is sponsoring a Prayer Retreat on April 8, 1980 at the Rocks Baptist Church, Pamplin. The time is 10:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Each lady is asked to bring a covered dish for lunch.

The book "Yes, A Woman's View of Mission Support" will be taught by Mrs. Frances DeFoe, Mission Support Chairman for the State of Virginia. Mrs. DeFoe is from Roanoke.

A nursery will be provided.

E.C.O. to meet Mar. 31

There will be a meeting of the Evergreen Cemetery organization at the Evergreen Community Center on Monday evening, March 31 at 7:30 p.m.

Holy Week services planned

Community - wide Holy Week Services will be held this year beginning on Monday, March 31, through Friday, April 4, at Liberty Baptist Church.

The services will begin at 12:10 p.m. and last for approximately 20 minutes. A light luncheon will follow each day in the church fellowship hall. The ladies of the church whose pastor is speaking at the day's service will provide the lunch for that day. The following pastors will bring the messages during the week:

Monday, March 31 - Rev. Ed Leonard, Memorial United Methodist Church

Tuesday, April 1 - Rev. Harmon Smith, St. Anne's Episcopal Church.

Wednesday, April 2 - Rev. Clarence Davis, New Hope Baptist Church.

Thursday, April 3 - Rev. Peter Hale, Appomattox C.H. Presbyterian Church.

Friday, April 4 - Rev. Rex Bennett, Liberty Baptist Church.

Then on Easter Sunday morning, April 6, at 7 a.m., a special Sunrise Service will be held at Liberty Baptist Church. The speaker will be the Rev. Edward Leonard of Memorial United Methodist Church. The other four ministers will participate in the service. Special music will be provided for the service. The entire community is urged to attend these special services coordinated by the Appomattox Ministerial Association.

FHA/HERO delegation attends conference

Cheryl Walton, Jane Guill, Joan Williams, Brenda Coleman, Wanda Forest and Cheryl Martin, members of the FHA-HERO Chapters at Appomattox County High School and Appomattox Middle School, and Miss Pat Hudson, Miss Wanda Royal, and Mrs. Betty Jo Smith, advisors, have just returned from Roanoke where they attended the State Leadership Conference of the Virginia Association, Future Homemakers of America at Hotel Roanoke, March 20-22, 1980. They are members of the Appomattox Junior and Senior Chapters FHA and Appomattox Senior Chapter HERO. The six youth delegates represented a state membership of approximately 20,000 home economics students.

The delegates pointed out that the main discussion centered around the conference theme which was "Commitment For The 80's".

During their stay at the meeting, they were trained in numerous leadership activities to help them operate more effectively as FHA/HERO leaders on the chapter and federation levels during the coming year.

Selection of individuals as delegates is based on outstanding c o ntribution and participation in the local FHA or HERO chapter and the home economics program.

Miss Wanda Gayle Royal is Appomattox Senior HERO Chapter advisor. Mrs. Betty Jo Smith is Appomattox Senior FHA Chapter advisor and Miss Pat Hudson is Appomattox Junior Chapter advisor.

Primary school menu

Mon., March 31 - Hot dog, slaw, French fries, cookie, and milk.

Tues., April 1 - Chili beans, cheese squares, tossed salad, milk, corn bread, butter, orange selections.

Wed., April 2 - Chicken salad, string beans, macaroni & cheese, roll, butter, milk, jello.

Fri., April 4 - Vegetable soup, apple sauce, cheese sandwich, milk, brownie

Thurs., April 3 - Turkey & gravy, green peas, candied yams, bread, milk, mixed fruit.

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Miss Loretta Darlene Davis and Mr. Bryan Kenneth Selz

Miss Davis to wed Mr. Selz

Mr. and Mrs. F. Stephen Davis Jr. of Amelia, Va. announce the engagement of their daughter, Loretta Darlene, to Bryan Kenneth Selz, son of Mrs. Bertram Neil Selz and the late Mr. Selz of Appomattox, Va.

Miss Davis is a 1975 graduate of Amelia County High School. She attended the University of Virginia and is presently a member of the United States Air Force assigned to the Pentagon, Washington, D. C.

Mr. Selz is a 1974 graduate of Appomattox County High School. He served in the United States Army and is presently enrolled at Va. Commonwealth University and working for the 7-UP Bottling Co. A May 31 wedding is planned.

Miss Linda Carol Grinels

Miss Grinels to wed Mr. Irby

Mr. and Mrs. John Southey Grinels of Appomattox announce the engagement of their daughter, Linda Carol to William Irby of Richmond, son of Mrs. Robert Cannon Irby of Blackstone, and the late Mr. Irby.

Miss Grinels was graduated from Mary Baldwin College and is a member of Phi Beta Kappa.

Mr. Irby was graduated from Virginia Military Institute and is a member of Kappa Alpha.

The wedding is planned for May 10.

Shawn White Knieriem and Milo Charles Otis

Miss Knieriem to wed Mr. Otis

Robert and Beulah Knieriem of Cleveland, Ohio announce the engagement of their daughter Shawn White, to Milo Charles Otis, son of Milo and Wanda Otis, also of Cleveland.

Ms. Knieriem attended Baldwin - Wallace College and is now employed by National City Bank. Mr. Otis attends Cuyahoga Community College and is employed as a security officer at Metropolitan General Hospital.

Mr. Otis' father is a professor at Cuyahoga Community Collge and Ms. Knieriem's father is a supervisor with the Cleveland Public Schools. Her mother taught with the Cleveland Public Schools before her recent retirement.

Ms. Knieriem is the granddaughter of Mrs. Virgie White of Appomattox.

The wedding is planned for June 13.

Mrs. Ferrell presents U.D.C. program

By MRS. TILDEN LEE

The Appomattox Chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy met on Thursday, March 20 at noon in the John Mosby Inn Restaurant for a luncheon meeting.

Mrs. Hazel Lee Martin, president of the local chapter, returned thanks for the meal.

The meeting was called to order by Mrs. Martin. Mrs. Frances Harvey led the group in Pledge to the United States flag. Mrs. Thelma Dickerson led in salutes to the Virginia flag and Mrs. Geneva Childers led in salutes to the Confederate flags.

The ritual was given by Mrs. Elaine Moore, and the Confederate prayer by Mrs. Martin.

Mrs. Pat Davis was welcomed as a new member into the chapter and presented a membership certificate by Mrs. Martin.

Mrs. Lucille Ferrell, chapter historian, presented a program on "Restoration of the Citizenship of Jefferson Davis."

On January 25, 1977, U. S. Senator Mark Hatfield, Oregon, introduced the Joint Senate Resolution to "Posthumously Restore Full Rights of Citizenship to Jefferson Finis Davis.

On September 26, 1987 the House of Representatives passed such a resolution which had been introduced in the House by Congressman Trent Lott, Representative from Mississippi. On October 17, 1978 President James Earl Carter signed the bill, and it became Public Law 950466, posthumously restoring full rights of citizenship to a great American soldier, statesman, patriot and President of the Confederacy. thse rights dating back from Christmas Day, 1868. That was 110 years that Jefferson Davis was without full citizenship rights. From the records we see what happened: When General Amesty was granted by President Andrew Johnson to other confederates after the surrender at Appomattox, Jefferson Davis was excluded from full rights of citizenship. He was in prison at Fortress Monroe for two years but was never brought to trial. But the fact that Jefferson Davis did not have full rights of citizenship, Senator Hatfield and Representative Lott, and the United Daughters of the Confederacy, felt such a great American should have his record set straight. We shall always be grateful to these and all the people for their work in restoring the citizenship of Jefferson Davis.

The Appomattox Chapter will be hostess to the Third District Spring meeting on Saturday, April 12, at 10 a.m. in the Parish room at St. Ann's Episcopal Church.

Registration and coffee hour will begin at 9:15 to 10:00 a.m.

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Shower honors Miss Franklin

Miss Alice Faye Franklin was honored Saturday night, March 22 with a lingerie shower. Hostesses for the occasion were Miss Stephanie Gilliam and Mrs. Sarah Robertson.

Among many guests, there were Mrs. Thelma Franklin, mother of the bride-to-be, and Mrs. Cecil Burks, mother of the groom-to-be, and Mrs. Louise Robertson, grandmother of the groom.

Miss Franklin received many nice things.

The wedding of Miss Alice Franklin to Mr. James Burks, Jr. will take place April 5 at 2 o'clock at New Hope Baptist Church. Everyone is invited.

Bowers announce birth of son

Mr. and Mrs. Larry Bowers of Narrows have announced the birth of a son, Jeffrey Todd, born March 23, 1980 at Montgomery County Hospital in Blacksburg. He weighed 7 pounds and 10¾ ounces.

Maternal grandparents are Mr. and Mrs. Charles Fraley, Jr. of Appomattox and paternal grandparents are Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Bowers of Narrows.

Wallaces announce birth of twins

Mr. and Mrs. Michael E. Wallace are proud to announce the birth of their twins, Edwin Douglas and Jennifer Louise Wallace, born on March 3.

Maternal grandparents are Mr. and Mrs. Douglas O. Doss, of Appomattox. Paternal grandparents are Mr. and Mrs. Edwin E. Wallace also of Appomattox.

Barnwells announce birth of son

Mr. and Mrs. Leonard B. Barnwell of Rockingham, North Carolina announce the birth of an 8 pound 3 ounce baby boy, Jason Carter, born on March 11, 1980 at Scotland Memorial Hospital in Laurinburg, North Carolina. Mrs. Barnwell is the former Jane Richardson of Appomattox.

Maternal grandparents are Thomas M. Richardson and the late Mildred C. Richardson of Appomattox. Maternal great-grand-parents are Mrs. Florine B. Carter and the late L. W. Carter, also of Appomattox.

Paternal grandparents are Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Barnwell of Hendersonville, North Carolina. Paternal great-grandparents are Mrs. Fannie Jones and the late Belton Jones also of Hendersonville.

The Barnwells are the parents of another son, Bruce.

Mr. and Mrs. Carroll Robinson of Baltimore, Maryland spent last week end with their mother and sister, Mrs. Bessie Robinson and Mrs. Dorothy Patrick.

* * *

Kirkie Hamlin of Pamplin was given a surprise birthday party Friday, March 21, in the home of Charlotte Satterwhite. Those attending were Kirkie, Charlotte, Florence Baldwin, Ruby Almond, Audrey Almond and children, Andrea and Wyatt and Helen Inge. Many nice gifts were received and it was indeed a real nice surprise for Kirkie.

Trinity UMYF to present cantata

On Palm Sunday, March 31, at 7:30 p.m., the UMYF of Trinity United Methodist Church will present "His Fleece Was White As Snow", an Easter musical for all ages.

The cantata will be presented in the sanctuary of the church. Everyone is invited to witness the Easter story, as told by the animals who were there: Dinky -- grandson of the donkey that carried Mary to Bethlehem; Snowy -- the lamb chosen for the Passover sacrifice; Mr. and Mrs. Rooster; Spotty -- the lamb who could never be chosen because of his spots.

The animals discover as we now know, that the resurrection event is the cause of the Christian's greatest rejoicing.

Mr. and Mrs. Cliff Thomas of Newport News spent the week end in Roanoke with relatives. Mrs. Thomas returned home after having spent the past two weeks here with her mother, Mrs. S. J. Evans.

* * *

H. C. Pulliam is a patient in a Richmond hospital.

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Mrs. Ethel Owen, Mrs. Jesslyn Davis, Miss Virginia Tolley and Miss Mary Tolley, all of Lynchburg, spent Thursday afternoon with Mrs. S. J. Evans.

* * *

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Fraley, Jr., spent Saturday night and Sunday in Blacksburg.

Parties honor Miss Grinels, Mr. Irby

Miss Linda Carol Grinels, whose marriage to Mr. William Irby takes place at 2 o'clock in the afternoon of May 10, in Memorial United Methodist Church, was honored Saturday when Mrs. David M. Trent and her daughter, Mrs. Tommy K. Hill, of Newport News entertained with a bridal luncheon at the Trent home.

Out-of-town guests were Miss Mabel V. Clary, Ms. Gale S. Corkran, Mrs. James D. Greenwood, Jr. and Mrs. Herbert D. Gordon of Richmond, Mrs. Forrest S. Wagoner of Oldhams and Mrs. Brian E. Thomas of Chesapeake.

Mrs. John A. Mathews and her daughter, Mrs. James D. Greenwood, Jr. of Richmond, honored Miss Grinels and Mr. Irby with a party at the Mathews home on Saturday evening.

Present were Mr. and Mrs. John S. Grinels, parents of the bride, Mrs. Robert C. Irby, mother of Mr. Irby, and a group of friends and relatives of the couple.

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